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SPAWN®

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DIGITAL
EDITION



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COMICS PRESENTS:

"PAYBACK"

PART 1



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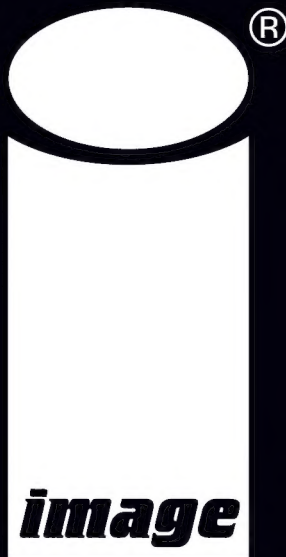
Dedicated to:
STAN LEE

FOR IMAGE COMICS

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SICILY.

THE MORNING ROUTINES ARE INTERRUPTED BY AN UNSCHEDULED DEMOLITION. HOWEVER, IT COMES AS NO SURPRISE TO THIS ITALIAN ISLAND'S BUSINESS DISTRICT. IN FACT, ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WERE GIVEN NEARLY AN HOUR'S NOTICE.

THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: MESS WITH THE MAFIA AND THEY'LL MESS YOU UP.

SKKRRRRRRRRK BK

THE MILITARY HAS BEEN CALLED, OF COURSE, BUT THERE'S NOTHING MUCH TO BE DONE. A MULTINATIONAL FIRM HAD REFUSED TO COOPERATE ON ALL LEVELS, SO THE CRIME CARTEL DECIDED TO DO SOME LEVELLING OF ITS OWN.



ALL THEY NEEDED WAS THEIR
ONE-MAN WRECKING CREW...

I LOVE
THIS JOB.

 **OVERT-KILL!**

IN WHISPERED VOICES,
SOME CALL HIM
"OVERKILL." IT HAS
TO DO WITH HIS TEN-
DENCY TO GO BEYOND
THE NECESSARY MEANS.

AS HE EMERGES, WRAITH-LIKE FROM THE FLAMES AND DESTRUCTION, HIS NAME BECOMES AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

HE'S DONE HIS JOB.
TIME NOW TO GO HOME.

HE'S STILL COMING--

FIRE!

VOOM

VOOM

VOOM

THE ARMY HAS DEALT WITH OVERT-KILL IN THE PAST. THAT'S WHY THEY'VE ARRIVED WITH ENOUGH FIREPOWER TO ENGAGE AN ENEMY BATTALION. TODAY'S ENGAGEMENT, THOUGH, IS ALSO A FEW SANDWICHES SHORT OF A PICNIC. OVERT-KILL CANNOT BE DAMAGED.

K-TING

K-TING

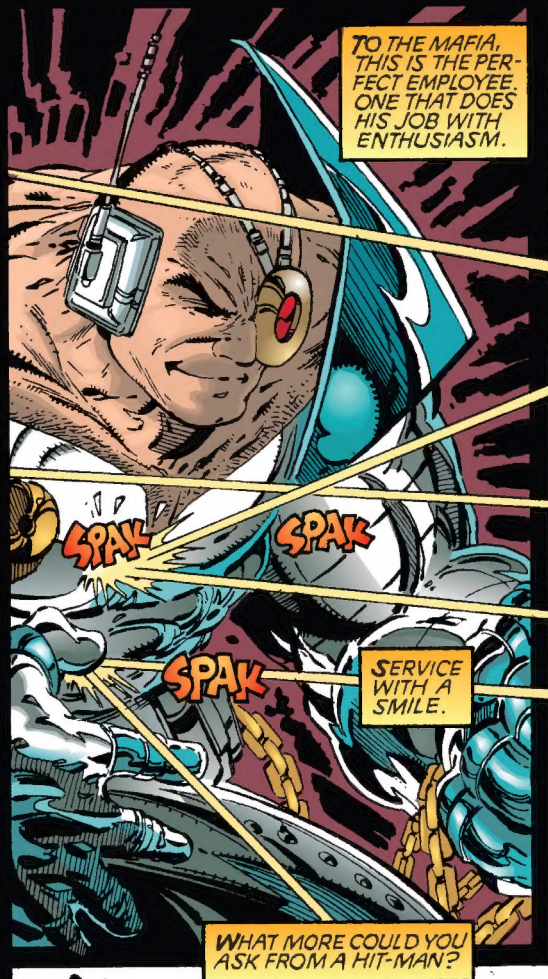
THE MESSAGE FINALLY SINKS IN.

NOW WHAT?!

TRY
RUNNING!!



TOO SLOW.



TO THE MAFIA, THIS IS THE PERFECT EMPLOYEE. ONE THAT DOES HIS JOB WITH ENTHUSIASM.

SPAK

SPAK

SPAK

SERVICE WITH A SMILE.

WHAT MORE COULD YOU ASK FROM A HIT-MAN?



GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I GET MAD!

KRUNCHKRUNCHKRUNCH

HURRY! GET THE CANNON IN POSITION!

I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO PUT THIS INTO ACTION--

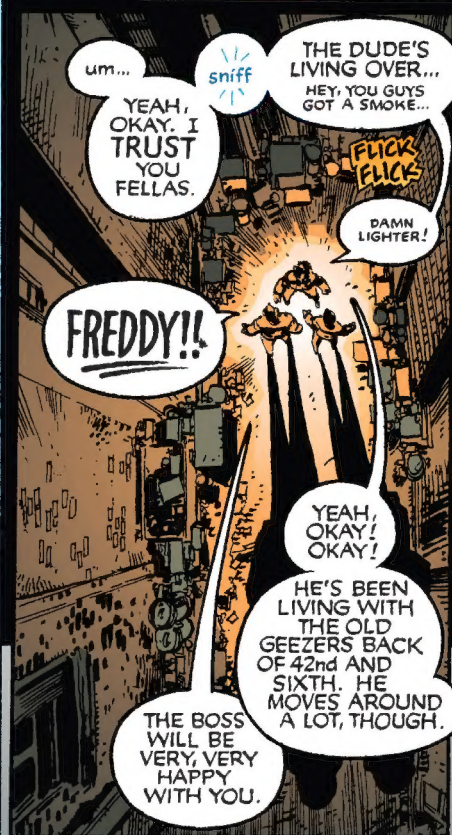
--BUT HE'S LEFT ME NO CHOICE!

SERGEANT ICO, THAT THING CAN WIPE OUT TWO CITY BLOCKS! BETTER HIT HIM THE FIRST TIME!

THE POINT BECOMES MOOT AS OVERT-KILL LEAPS HIGH INTO THE AIR AND COMES CRASHING DOWN-- DIRECTLY ON THE KP-211AF4 SPECIAL...

...A.K.A. THE SILVER GOD.

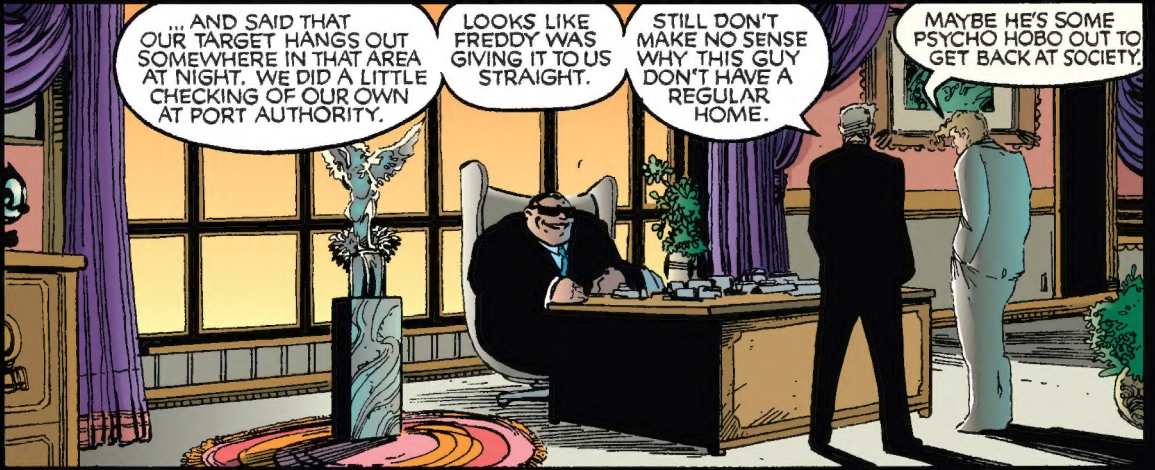
THERE ARE REASONS WHY THE MAFIA IS ABLE TO HOLD ONTO POWER.



BANG

I'M SURE HE'LL SEND FLOWERS.



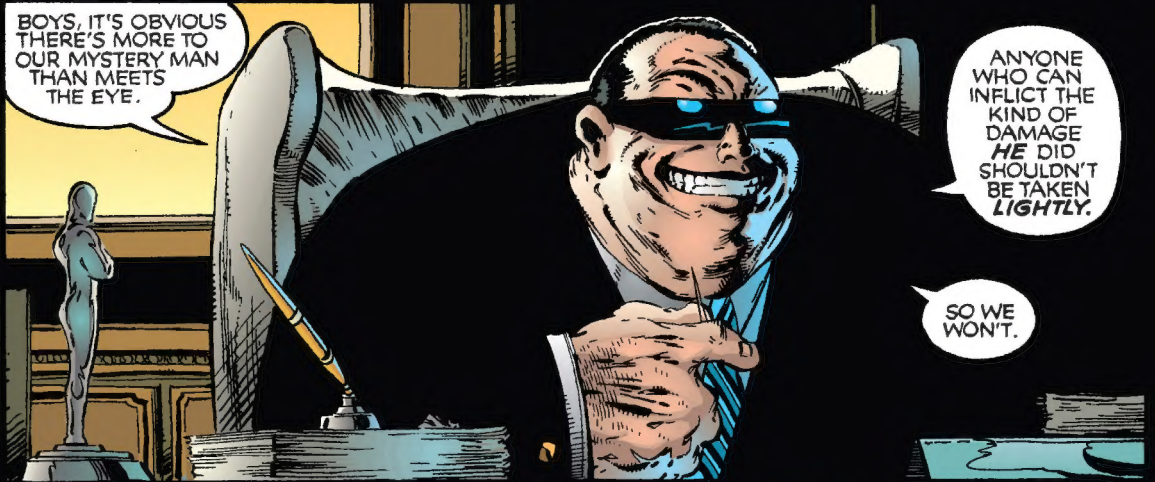


... AND SAID THAT OUR TARGET HANGS OUT SOMEWHERE IN THAT AREA AT NIGHT. WE DID A LITTLE CHECKING OF OUR OWN AT PORT AUTHORITY.

LOOKS LIKE FREDDY WAS GIVING IT TO US STRAIGHT.

STILL DON'T MAKE NO SENSE WHY THIS GUY DON'T HAVE A REGULAR HOME.

MAYBE HE'S SOME PSYCHO HOBO OUT TO GET BACK AT SOCIETY.



BOYS, IT'S OBVIOUS THERE'S MORE TO OUR MYSTERY MAN THAN MEETS THE EYE.

ANYONE WHO CAN INFLICT THE KIND OF DAMAGE HE DID SHOULDN'T BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.

SO WE WON'T.



I WANT YOU TWO TO MAKE SURE THIS JOB IS DONE QUICKLY AND QUIETLY. THE OTHER DONS ARE WAITING FOR RESULTS.

MAKE SURE WE *NEVER* HEAR FROM THIS MAN AGAIN.



YES, BOSS.

OH...

ANOTHER THING. MAKE SURE HE SUFFERS BEFORE YOU KILL HIM.

THEN, BRING ME HIS HEART.

Yo!

AL, WHY YOU ALWAYS SITTING BY YOURSELF? WE **DISEASED** OR SOMETHIN'?

C'MON, MAN.

WE AIN'T HERE TO GETCHA. WE'RE JUST **HERE**.

WE DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'RE RUNNIN' FROM--!

HELL, WE **ALL** GOT SECRETS. I GOT STORIES THAT'D CHILL YOUR BLOOD-- BUT IT DON'T DO NO GOOD TO KEEP REHASHING THE PAST. **SURVIVING'S** WHAT WE'RE ABOUT.

BUT IN THE MEANTIME, WE CAN GIVE EACH OTHER COMPANY. FOR MOST OF US, THAT'S ALL WE **GOT**. WE DON'T CARE WHERE YA BEEN OR HOW YA GOT THERE...

...OR EVEN WHY YOU WEAR THAT OUTFIT.

WE JUST DON'T WANT YOU TO BE AFRAID OF US.

INCREDIBLE.

EXTENDING THEIR TRUST TO AN INTRUDER. HOW BASIC THEIR LIVES HAVE BECOME. WARMTH. FOOD. COMPANIONSHIP. THEY WON'T ALLOW MY OR ANYONE'S SELF-PITY IN THEIR DOMAIN. THIS ALLEY-WAY IS THEIR CASTLE.

THE LEAST I CAN DO IS LEARN TO LIVE BY THEIR RULES.

GENTLE-MEN...

IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO SHARE A STORY WITH YOU...

8:0:9:2

IT'S A STORY THAT TIES DIRECTLY INTO A SMALL FAMILY DWELLING NESTLED AMONG THE CLASSIC TRAPPINGS OF SUBURBIA, U.S.A. THE LOCATION IS QUEENS; THE OCCUPANTS ARE QUITE TYPICAL:

A MOTHER, A FATHER AND A BABY.

THE LOVE SHARED BY THESE THREE HELPS KEEP THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY TIGHTLY WOVEN. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS JOY IS BORN OF TRAGEDY.

THAT TRAGEDY HAD A NAME: AL SIMMONS, A.K.A. SPAWN.

WHEEEEEEE!

HIS WIDOW, WANDA BLAKE, HAS BELIEVED HIM TO BE DEAD FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS. BUT, WHILE SHE WAS SHATTERED BY AL'S UNTIMELY DEATH, SHE FOUND THE STRENGTH TO MOVE FORWARD. IT WAS THIS KIND OF COURAGE THAT CAUSED AL TO FALL HOPELESSLY IN LOVE WITH HER.

A WHOLE LOT OF THAT LOVE COMES FROM CYAN, HER BABY DAUGHTER--THOUGH AT FIFTEEN MONTHS SHE IS HARDLY AN INFANT ANY LONGER.

RUNNING! SCREAMING! BANGING! LONG PERIODS OF SILENCE ARE A THING OF THE PAST...

OH OH!

READY?

NOW SHE IS REMARRIED, AND LOVE IS ONCE AGAIN PART OF HER LIFE.

...AND WANDA WOULDN'T TRADE IT FOR ANYTHING. THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL, A CHILD, HAS FINALLY BEEN GIVEN TO HER...

...AND HER NEW HUSBAND.

NOT ONLY IS TERRY FITZGERALD A GOOD FATHER AND CARING SPOUSE, BUT HE WAS THE BEST FRIEND OF AL SIMMONS. IF ANYONE COULD TAKE CARE OF WANDA BETTER THAN AL, IT WOULD BE TERRY.

THIS MAKES THE SITUATION EVEN MORE TRAGIC. SHOULD AL INTRUDE, OR LEAVE WANDA TO LIVE HER NEW LIFE IN PEACE?

HERE WE GO!



NEITHER CHOICE WILL BRING HAPPINESS TO ALL INVOLVED. UNTIL OUR HERO REACHES A DECISION, HE'LL BE HAUNTED BY THIS "NO-WIN" SITUATION THAT'S SLOWLY TEARING HIM APART.

IN A GHETTO OF
DISPLACED
HUMANITY BEHIND
PORT AUTHORITY
BUS TERMINAL...

THIS IS GOING
GREAT. WE'VE LEFT
A TRAIL EVEN A
BLIND MAN
COULD FOLLOW.

DON'T KNOW
WHY THIS HERO'S
SO ATTACHED TO
THESE BUMS **ANY-**
WAYS. GUESS HE LIKES
HANGING AROUND **CRAP.**
Y'KNOW WHAT I
MEAN?

EXCUSE
ME, LOSER.
MAY I HAVE A
WORD WITH
YOU?

wha...
?

OH!

A **SMART-**
ASS, HUH?!

SPAT!

Hee hee
hee

THIS IS A
RIOT! A
COUPLE MORE
AND I GUESS
WE CAN SIT
BACK AND WAIT
FOR THE **CAPED**
DUDE TO
SHOW.

HOW
MANY
IS THIS
NOW? **FOUR?**

FIVE.

BUT WHO'S
COUNTING?

I'M GLAD YOU CAN LAUGH AT THIS, TOMMY. I LEARNED A LONG TIME AGO THAT YOU CAN'T TAKE *ANY* OF THIS PERSONALLY.

Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

YUP.

'CAUSE WHO WANTS TO TAKE THEIR WORK WITH THEM. I'D RATHER WATCH FOOTBALL.

SUCK DOWN A FEW BEERS. RELAX. Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

YUP.

SO WE'LL JUST TAKE CARE OF THIS HIT TONIGHT, REPORT BACK TO THE BOSS ON A JOB WELL DONE, THEN GO FIND US A COUPLE OF BROADS.

YOU UP FOR IT?

YUP.

UH?!

GEJRRK

YOUR FRIEND IS DEAD! IT'S JUST YOU AND ME, COWARD. NOW I WANT TO KNOW WHO'S AFTER ME...

...AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHY?!

Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

The New York Times

ALLEY LITTERED WITH BODIES

TWO KNOWN FELONS AMONG THE CORPSES

SO WE
AGREE THAT
MORE DRASTIC
MEASURES ARE
APPROPRIATE.

GOOD.

YOU'VE ALL
HEARD OF THE
AGENT I'M
REFERRING TO.
BARTINO SAID
THAT HE'S AVAILABLE
FOR THIS SPECIAL
ASSIGNMENT-- BOTH
AS A FAVOR TO US,
AND FOR A TWO
PERCENT CUT OF
NEXT WEEK'S
TAKE.

A FAIR
PRICE.

NOW, LET US
VOTE. DO WE
CONTINUE LETTING
SOME BACK-ALLEY
HERO KEEP KILLING
US, OR DO WE
DISPOSE OF THE
PARASITE?

WHACK 'IM.

WHACK HIM.

WHACK
HIM.

DISPOSE
OF HIM.

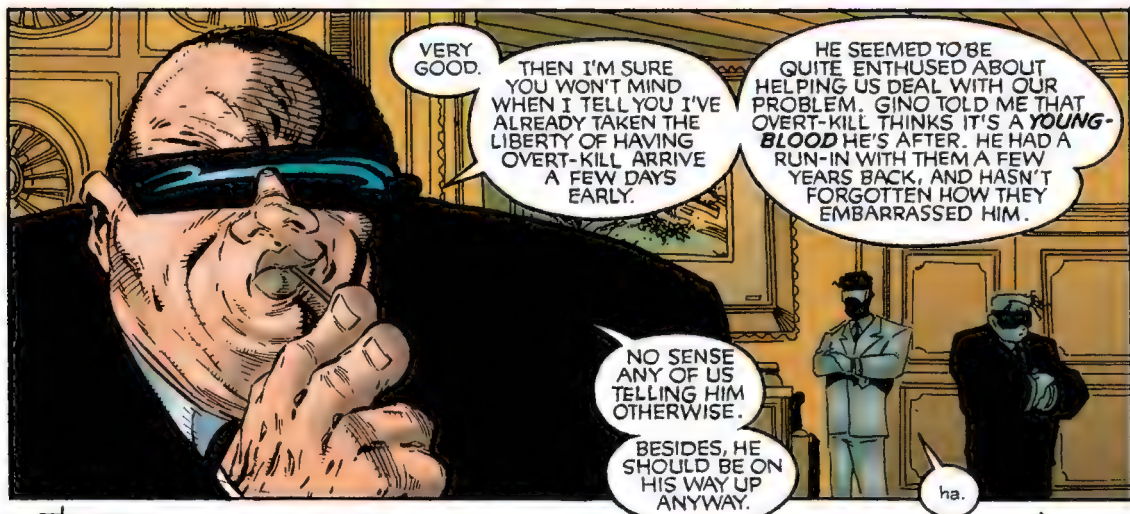
HEE. HEE.
WHACK
HIM!

KILL HIM.

WHACK
HIM, SIR.

LET HIM LIVE, I SAY!
-- JUST KIDDING.
SLAUGHTER HIM!

VERY FUNNY, TONY.
THEN IT'S
UNANIMOUS.



VERY GOOD.

THEN I'M SURE YOU WON'T MIND WHEN I TELL YOU I'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF HAVING OVERT-KILL ARRIVE A FEW DAYS EARLY.

HE SEEMED TO BE QUITE ENTHUSED ABOUT HELPING US DEAL WITH OUR PROBLEM. GINO TOLD ME THAT OVERT-KILL THINKS IT'S A **YOUNG-BLOOD** HE'S AFTER. HE HAD A RUN-IN WITH THEM A FEW YEARS BACK, AND HASN'T FORGOTTEN HOW THEY EMBARRASSED HIM.

NO SENSE ANY OF US TELLING HIM OTHERWISE.

BESIDES, HE SHOULD BE ON HIS WAY UP ANYWAY.

ha.

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM

"ON HIS WAY UP." WHAT A SENSE OF HUMOR THE BOSS HAS.

I KNOW WHATCHA MEAN. I HEARD THE GUY'S AS BIG AS A HOUSE.

HE WOULDN'T EVEN FIT THROUGH THE DOOR.

HA-HA.

KRINKLE

GENTLEMEN, MAY I PRESENT THE SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS.

HI.

WORD QUICKLY SPREADS THAT THE MOB REQUESTS A MEETING WITH THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF ITS SEVEN LEADERS.

ADDED TO THAT REQUEST IS THE BROKEN BODY OF ANOTHER HOMELESS VICTIM. SPAWN HAD NEVER MET THIS VAGRANT, AND IS NOT HAPPY THAT ALL THE STREET PEOPLE ARE UNDER THREAT BY IMPLIED ASSOCIATION.

HE INTENDS TO CORRECT THIS SITUATION IMMEDIATELY.

SCUMBAG.

ALWAYS PREYING ON THE WEAK.

LET'S SEE HOW YOU DEAL WITH DEATH WARMED OVER.

THOUGH HE KNOWS HE'S NO ACTOR, AL REALIZES HIS COSTUME LENDS AN ELEMENT OF FEARSOMENESS. IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT HE'LL TAKE IT.

SHOW YOURSELF... IF YOU DARE.

HA!

GOOD ONE, AMERICAN!!

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU WEREN'T AFRAID TO FACE ME!

THAT'S ADMIRABLE.

KRAK



AND A LITTLE
IDIOTIC!

DON'T PUFF YOUR-
SELF UP ON MY ACCOUNT!
I'M HERE BECAUSE OTHERWISE
YOU'LL JUST CONTINUE TO
BEAT BAG LADIES
TO A PULP.

WHAT A
HERO!

YOU'VE
GOT A
PROBLEM
WITH ME?
THEN HERE
I AM!

...THOUGH
FOR THE LIFE OF
ME, I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
I'VE DONE.

I CAN
SEE BY YOUR
DEMEANOR THAT
YOU'RE TOO STUPID
TO CARE ABOUT
THAT!

WITH THE NAME-CALLING
OUT OF THE WAY, THE
TWO GLADIATORS QUICKLY
SIZE EACH OTHER UP.

AND SINCE SOMEONE HAS
TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE,
EMOTION LEADS THE CHARGE.

DON'T
CALL ME
STUPID
!!

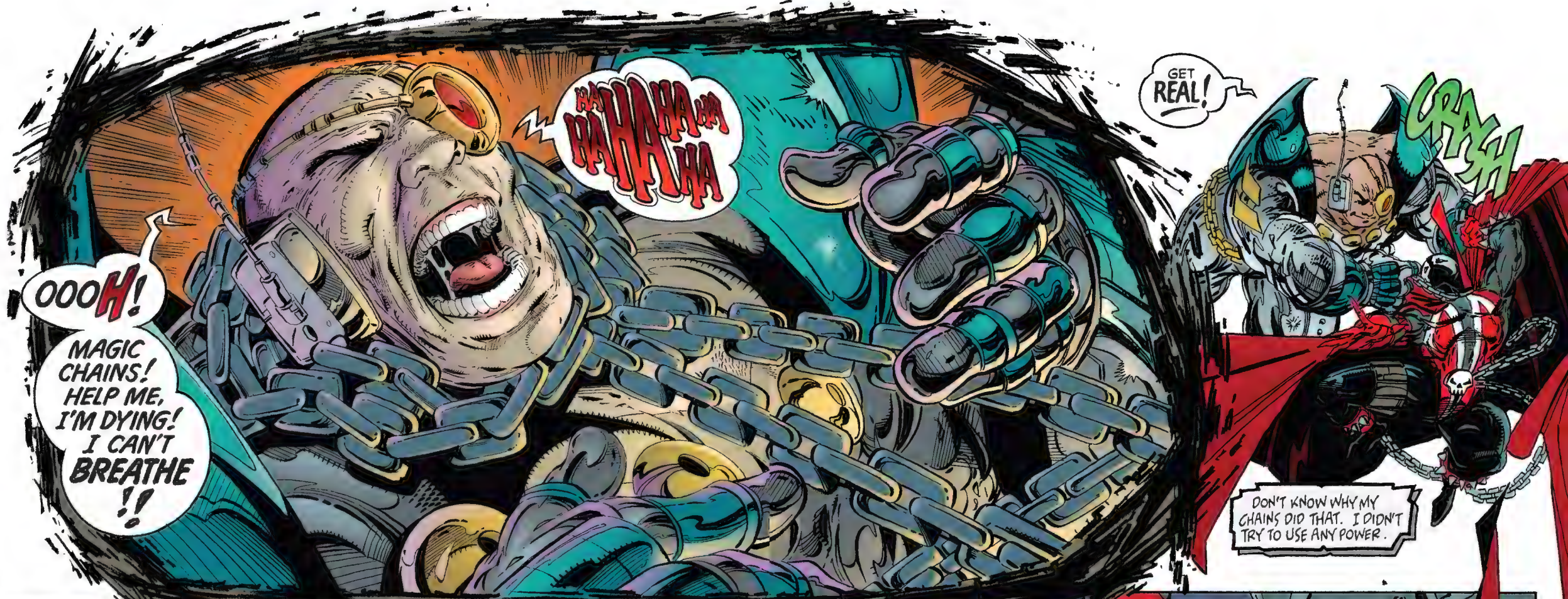
I WAS
GOING TO
KILL YOU
QUICKLY,
BUT NOW
I SEE
THERE'S NO
POINT IN
HURRYING.

SHOVE
IT, YOU
FREAK!

I THINK
HE'S
MAD!

I'M NOT SOME
DRUNK HOBO THAT
YOU CAN STEAMROLL.
OR ARE YOU AFRAID
OF SOMEONE WHO
CAN FIGHT BACK?!

CRASH



OOOH!
MAGIC CHAINS!
HELP ME,
I'M DYING!
I CAN'T
BREATHE
!!

HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA

GET
REAL!

CRASH

DON'T KNOW WHY MY
CHAINS DID THAT. I DIDN'T
TRY TO USE ANY POWER.



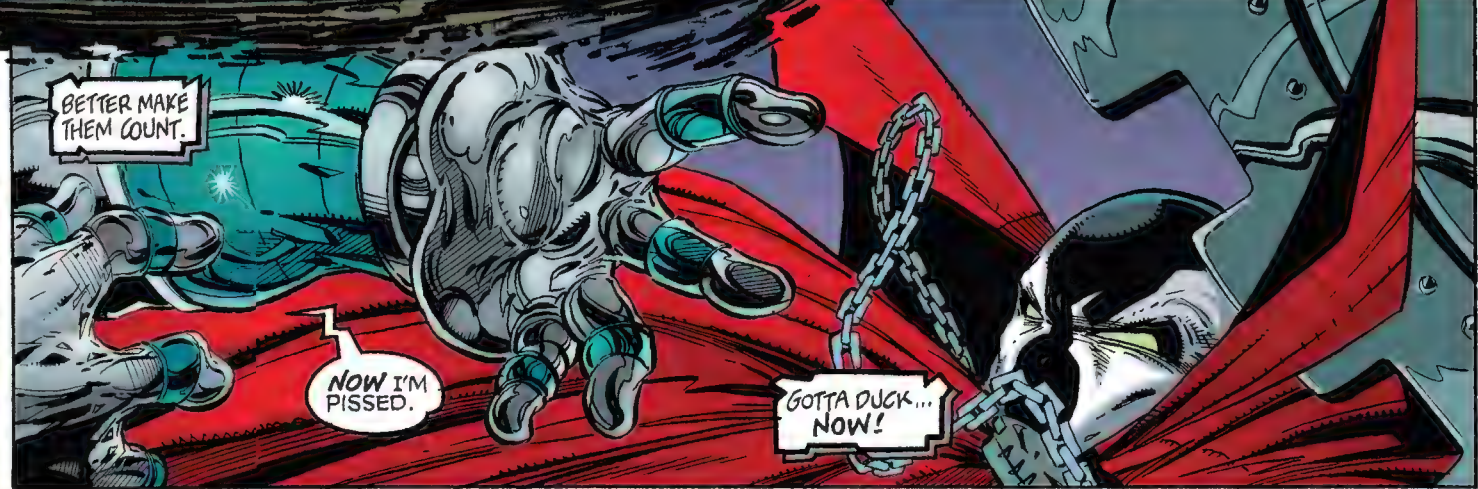
I'LL FIGURE IT
OUT LATER.
RIGHT NOW
I'VE GOT
MY HANDS
FULL.

NOW YOU SIT
STILL LIKE A GOOD
LITTLE BOY WHILE
I RIP YOUR
HEAD OFF.

HEY!
QUIT YER
SQUIRMING,
I SAID...

SPEAKING
OF WHICH...

GRABBED TOO MUCH
CAPE... I'VE GOT ONLY
A FEW SECONDS...



BETTER MAKE
THEM COUNT.


NOW I'M
PISSED.

GOTTA DUCK...
NOW!



uh?

KRUNCH!



DO NOT
LOOK SO
CONFIDENT,
MY FRIEND.

SUCH
SMUGNESS
HAS BEEN THE
DOWNFALL
OF MEN
GREATER
THAN YOU.

THIS **MINOR**
SETBACK WILL
ONLY MAKE THE
BATTLE MORE
**CHALLENG-
ING!**

A **CYBORG!**

I FOUGHT THEM YEARS
AGO, BEFORE I WAS
KILLED. BUT THEY
WEREN'T NEARLY AS
ADVANCED.

NOR AS
DEADLY.

SAVE IT
FOR SOME-
ONE WHO
CARES.

POP!



YOU ARE
TOO SLOW, MY
FRIEND!

SWAK

YOUR GOVERNMENT
MUST TRULY BE
DESPERATE, TO HAVE
MADE YOU ONE OF THEIR
YOUNGBLOOD!

WHAT'S HE
TALKING
ABOUT?

COME
ON! GET
UP!

I HAVE SEEN
NO EVIDENCE OF
YOU HAVING THE POWER
TO RIP MEN'S HEARTS
OUT! SHOW ME
YOUR SKILLS!

MAKE MY
TRIP TO
AMERICA
WORTH IT!

GLAK

COME ON!
FIGHT!

FIGHT!!

NO.

I SAID...

DO YOU
HEAR
ME?

NO.

FIGHT!

SHOW
ME YOUR
POWER!
SHOW ME
YOUR
STRENGTH
!!

LET'S SEE
WHAT KIND
OF HEROES
THE U.S.
MAKES!

SINCE YOU
WON'T FIGHT
FOR YOUR COUNTRY,
YOU CAN DO SOME-
THING ELSE...

BAH!

DIE!





DEAD!

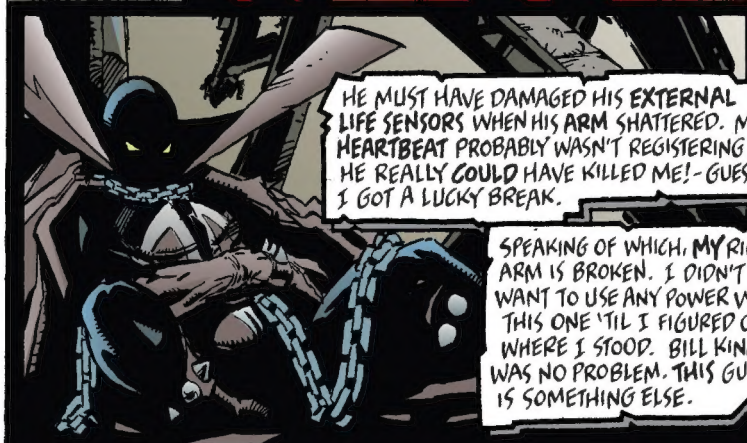
AND I DIDN'T EVEN
BREAK A SWEAT!
'COURSE, COME
TO THINK OF IT,
I **CAN'T**
SWEAT!

HAW-
HAW.

WHAT A
FRIGGIN' WASTE
OF TIME. THE GUY
COULD JUST HAVE
BEEN SHOT BY ONE
OF THE LOCAL WISE-
GUYS, INSTEAD OF
MAKING ME LEAVE
MY ASSIGNMENT IN
SICILY. STUFF LIKE
THIS JUST **PISSES**
ME OFF.

I DON'T
NEED NO
EASY KILLS.

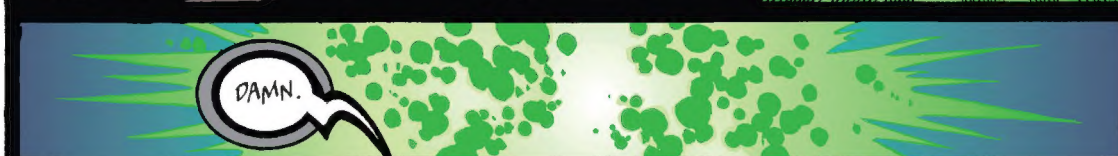
DEAD? WHAT'S HE BABBLING
ABOUT? HE HAD ME COLD,
AND DIDN'T PUT ME AWAY?!



HE MUST HAVE DAMAGED HIS EXTERNAL
LIFE SENSORS WHEN HIS ARM SHATTERED. MY
HEARTBEAT PROBABLY WASN'T REGISTERING.
HE REALLY COULD HAVE KILLED ME! - GUESS
I GOT A LUCKY BREAK.

NOW
I'VE GOT TO
DRAIN MORE
POWER.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, MY RIGHT
ARM IS BROKEN. I DIDN'T
WANT TO USE ANY POWER WITH
THIS ONE 'TIL I FIGURED OUT
WHERE I STOOD. BILL KINCAID
WAS NO PROBLEM. THIS GUY
IS SOMETHING ELSE.



DAMN.

LATER THAT NIGHT,
SPAWN TRAVELS
AN ARMY BASE.
HIS LIFE, SPENT
AS A MERCENARY,
DIDN'T END
WITH ANY SHORT-
AGE OF WELL-
KEPT SECRETS.

IT'S TIME I
STOPPED RUNNING
AROUND WITH MY
TAIL BETWEEN
MY LEGS...

...AND STARTED USING
THE SKILLS I ALREADY
HAVE. NO NEED TO
WASTE MY POWERS.
DIDN'T HAVE THEM BE-
FORE, NO SENSE USING
THEM AS A CRUTCH
NOW.

AIN'T
NO ONE
GOING TO
FORCE ME
TO USE MY
POWERS
AGAIN.

GETTING
TIRED
OF BEING
PUSHED
AROUND.

HOPE
THEY'RE STILL
STORED
HERE.

ESPECIALLY
NOT SOME
BLOODY
CYBORG HALF-
BREED!

CHAK
CLICK
SNAP



I'M
BETTER
THAN
THAT!

U.S. ARMY





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE